

Information about Back Injuries

Demographics

The demographic data of Army back injuries and disabilities indicates some interesting facts:

- 87% of back disability cases are for male soldiers
- 44% of back disabilities are soldiers who are from 24 to 34 years of age – not the older or senior personnel as many believe.
- 69% of these cases are in the rank of Corporal to Staff Sergeant

Occupations

The occupations that are associated with higher than average risk of back disability are:

- Infantryman
- Wheeled vehicle driver
- Heavy construction equipment operator
- Construction equipment operator
- Tow infantryman

Jobs

These jobs include occupational risk factors associated with back injuries such as:

- Awkward postures – squatting, stooping, small / tight / cramped workspace
- Frequent bending and twisting
- Heavy lifting
- Pushing and pulling
- Repetition

Behavior

The three main behavior faults that result in back injuries are:

- Failure to get help in lifting heavy or awkward objects. People do not like to ask for help. Instead of disturbing a fellow soldier, they will attempt to lift a heavy or bulky item alone.
- Improper lifting or exertion techniques.
- Failure to utilize material handling equipment - even when it is available. People like to take shortcuts and do things in the quickest way. Many times, these shortcuts result in serious back injuries.